



LOCAL 2107 NEWS

VOLUME XV- NO 1

February 2004 Edition

Scholarships

David S. Barr Award for student journalists in high school and college! DEADLINE-1/30/04

http://www.newsguild.org/awards/Barr_Award_US_Form.pdf

Union Plus Scholarship-DEADLINE to apply January 31, 2004. Qualifications-accepted into or attending an accredited school. At least one year of good-standing membership in a union participating in the Union Plus Credit Card program. Graduate students are not eligible You can download a copy from:

www.unionplus.org/scholarships.

Joe Beirne Scholarship Information

Applications will be accepted between November 2003 and March 31, 2004, the final deadline. Early submission is encouraged. The winners will be chosen by lottery. (Web Only)

<http://cwa-union.org/members/beirne/index.asp>

Roberta B Mervine Scholarship Fund

Call or email the local office if you want a scholarship form sent to you for the 2004-2005 school year.

We are going to need your support with fund raisers to keep the scholarship fund going. If you have any ideas, contact Donna or Denise. We will be announcing activities in the next few months.

Community Service

February 13th a bake sale will be held at Riva Road. Proceeds will benefit the Community Service Fund.

The Craft and Poinsettia sale brought in \$267.87 to benefit the Pediatric Aids Foundation. Thank you all for your support.

Dates to Remember

02-02	Membership meetings Northern Area, Annapolis	6:30PM
02-03	Southern Area, LaPlata	6:30PM

Other Meetings

01-27	Executive Board meeting	1:00 PM
02-02	MD State Council meeting	10:30 AM
02-09	Retiree meeting local office	10:00 AM
02-24	Executive Board meeting	TBA

Other

02-17	Deadline for newsletter articles	
02-24		

Get Well to:

Neal Chewing, out with a broken arm
Rocky Turner, recovering from hand surgery

Welcome Back:

Joe Clark

Sympathies to:

Ike Barriger, on the death of his mother
Chris Barriger, on the death of his grandmother
Bruce Cooke, on the death of his mother

What Can We Look Forward to at Verizon This Year?

by Ray Pomeroy

What can we expect at Verizon this year? Change! As well as more of the same. Oftentimes it will feel as if the company is changing what works while continuing to ignore the things that don't. In some case that will be true, in others...well, we'll see.

The company recently completed the latest round of surpluses and ISP offers which were much better received than was expected and therefore lost more people than they really could afford to.

What's it mean to me? New faces showing up at a location near you, particularly new management faces. A lot of the new first levels will start out ok, remembering where they came from and how difficult it is to do the job you do, while some others think you're a slacker, always thought you were a slacker or maybe just don't really know what it is you do here.

They'll learn. What we have already learned however, is if the new guy is making mistakes in following the contract or in the way they treat us or our co-workers we need to bring that to their attention immediately. We have learned first hand that if we just blow something off with the old "he's new he'll learn" it can backfire and really become a problem

later. The way to try to prevent this (it won't always work some people are just like that) is to point it out to them. If they are unreceptive or you are uncomfortable in that position, bring the issue to a Steward to deal with. They will point out to the person that the issue is business not personal and resolve the issue in a way that leaves a little dignity for everyone.

We'll also be seeing some movement, although it remains to be seen if the "Fluid Workforce" and "Seasonal Workforce" concepts work as we understand them.

Part of what drives these concepts is that Verizon has embraced Fiber To The Premise (FTTP) and earmarked \$100 million for it this year. The project looks to be starting in Montgomery County so it is likely that many of our members will be getting acquainted with the traffic and the eateries in that area. Just be sure to read Denise Burns' article on pg 2 and take heed.

There are changes going on in the entire company and we will deal with them as they come. In the meantime the Union is looking for you to be the eyes and ears out there through all this change because the Stewards and Officers can't be everywhere.

Heads Up Cingular

What does February 5, 2005 mean to you? In a little over one year your contract will be expiring. Do you know what that means or what you need to do?

Have you looked at your contract, do you know what is in it? Do you question management or contact your union rep when you think something is wrong or against the contract? Are you willing to step up to make the next contract better?

It's up to you. Now is the time to take an interest in your future.

Local 2107 Contact Information

The Local's e-mail address, cwa2107@workingfamilies.com is no longer valid.

Our new general address is 2107@cwa-2107.org, you can also check page two of every newsletter for individual officer e-mail addresses as well as the newsletter and the other general address- cwa2107@starpower.net.

The Local's street address and phone numbers are also on page two of every issue.

Cingular is making changes to some of our members' commissions. The following information is from Teri Pluta, CWA District 6 staff, who oversees the Joint Commission Committee.

The change for the BSS and Corporate Care reps, effective 1/1/04, removes all at risk money and the quarterly score card payments.

Cingular has agreed to roll the "at risk" amount (this amount varies by market) into the base wages at 100%. If the employee is already at the max of their wage schedule or any part of the at risk amount causes them to get to the max, payments will be made quarterly by check. While putting 100% of the at risk money into the base and/or pay-out is a good thing, this will not be enough compensation for those employees who "exceeded the targets" during 2003.

Teri has stated the Unions dissatisfaction over this - but Cingular does not believe they have to bargain Commission based on language in Article 19 sec 2 of the contract..

Cingular Commissions

by Ray Pomeroy

Teri has also requested that the door be left open for her to meet with the "decision makers" so that they can continue to discuss our concern and possible improvements to the plan. In the mean time they are implementing the 2004 plan as above.

A joint commission committee was just held in Atlanta but we do not have any details yet. We will bring you the news as we get it.

In the meantime our members who are

affected by this need to mobilize around it. You need to demonstrate your opposition to the new plan, if you are indeed opposed to it. It will be good practice for your next round of contract negotiations as well, which will most likely start late in the fall (don't hold me to that, it's a supposition).

You are going to have to come up with your own mobilization ideas because you know your workplace best although there are a number of techniques you can use in an office environment that we can help you with. Go through Kara Erwin for assistance and she can get help from the people who are experienced with mobilization efforts at Verizon.

Ultimately the issue will probably be dealt with at the 2005 bargaining table but you have to start standing up to the company now. It's your future.

«FirstName» «LastName» «Suffix»
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Periodical Mail
POSTAGE
PAID
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ISSN 0890-8532

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LOCAL 2107 NEWS
Published Monthly By
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Local 2107**
Affiliated with the AFL-CIO

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(ISSN 0890-8532) Periodical Postage
Paid at Annapolis, MD. 21401
Office Located at:
2441 Holly Ave
Annapolis MD 21401-3116
Phone: 410-224-0166
Fax: 410-224-0165

Postmaster, send changes to:
Local 2107 NEWS
2441 Holly Ave.
Annapolis, MD. 21401-3116



President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

All of our members, Cingular and Verizon alike, are feeling the crunch of downsizing. Work harder, do more and more with less and less.

Although there are not enough workers in the workplace that does not mean that management, someone in another job title, or a contractor should be doing your work. If management is doing your work you should ask them to stop. If they don't, refer it to a steward. If someone from another job title is doing your work find out why and who asked them to. If there is a contractor brought into your location ask who they work for and how long they are going to be there. Then refer these things to your steward. If it's happening the company needs to hire some people.

Don't believe the myth that you can do any job that pays less than yours either, we do not and will not agree on that. The Union's position is that you can work down in your job family (COT doing frame work etc).

Most of us are conscientious workers and take pride in our work. But, if your crew or location is short handed you shouldn't be giving up your rights "because the work has to be done" either. First of all, management should be aware of the problem, if they aren't, make them aware. Don't wait, speak up as soon as you realize there is a problem. Regardless of the size of the workforce, you are still entitled to breaks and lunches. If you work overtime you should be paid overtime, i.e. working through lunch but not putting it on your time sheet. Not only would you be

forfeiting your compensation but you would be falsifying records and could be terminated. Being short handed doesn't mean we should take short cuts from safety, work without being paid, or do something else that will cause us grief later either. The business is still the same, the laws are the same and our protections are the same. The only difference now is the workforce is smaller.

In an effort to "improve productivity" Management may also start cracking down on issues that were ignored before. If you know that you are in the wrong stop what you are doing. Be where you are supposed to be, when you are supposed to be there. You should say and do what you are supposed to if you work on the phone too, many of you are, or can be, monitored.

You need to become familiar with your contracts. This will help you understand what can and can't be done. It will also help you distinguish between a complaint and a real problem. If you have trouble understanding something in the contract get a steward or an officer to get you an explanation. Sometimes we even have to go back to our bargaining committee to get the intent of the language.

"The next time you wonder what the union does for you, take a look at the car you drive, the house you own, the standard of living you have, and realize that the union got these for you and that management is hell bent on driving your standard of living into the ground."

Tom Kelly President APWU local

Union Plus Entertainment Savings

You and your family can now save on all types of entertainment through the new Union Plus Entertainment Discounts program:

Theme Parks – Save up to \$15 per ticket at Adventure Island, Busch Gardens, Hershey Park, Paramout's Great America, SeaWorld, Six Flags, Universal Studios and more.

Movie Rentals – Save up to 20 percent on video and DVD rentals at Hollywood Video and Blockbuster when you buy movie rental coupons in advance. The cost per rental is just \$3.40.

Movie Theaters – Up to 40 percent off regular ticket prices at AMC, CineMark, City Cinemas, Clearview Cinemas, Crown, Harkins, Hoyts Cinemas, Lanmark, Loew, Mann, Marcus, Pacific, Regal Cinemas when you buy multiple tickets.

Theater, Museums, Aquariums, City Passes and Sporting Events – Major League Baseball in selected cities: New York, Boston, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New Jersey and San Francisco.

Purchase tickets or passes over the Internet at www.unionplus.org/entertainment or by phone at (800) 565-3712, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Eastern time. Use ID number 744387769.

The program also allows member to earn "Advantage Points" on purchases that can be redeemed for free entertainment. Members are credited with 200 points upon signing up and can earn one additional point for every dollar spent on purchases.

For additional information, visit www.unionplus.org/entertainment.

This is going to be a very busy year in the political arena. Maryland's General Assembly is now in session. Primaries and the Democratic Convention will continue to be in the news. And of course, the elections in November.

The Maryland General Assembly is gearing up to address many issues. Some of the larger issues at hand are Health-Care for All, Living Wage, Workers Compensation and funding the Thornton Education Bill. Also Bills are expected on a Disclosure Law and Clawbacks. It is expected that legislation on the environment, inter-county connector and fee increases will be at the forefront. How to best deal with the projected 700 million dollar

Congratulations to Our Latest Retirees

GERALD T. ADKINS	WILLIAM C. JAMAR
SELINA R. ALLEN	AMOS R. JOHNSON
WILLIAM S. BAILEY	ELLEN K. JOHNSON
KENNETH M. BOSWELL	JOHN H. JORDAN
KAREN R. BROOKS	RUTH I. KENDIG
YVONNE E. BROWN	ROBERT A. KOBUS
RHONDA R. BRUNSON	DORIS C. LANE
DAVID M. CAMPBELL	ELLA E. MEADE
JAMES L. CORDRAY	TIMOTHY MCCUMBER
BOBBY WEARHART	STEVEN A. SHAKLEE
CONNIE FRANK	GERALD S. SHLAGEL
CLIFFORD L. GABUS	MARY L. STIEFF
DARLENE L. HOLT	STEVENSON C. WOODS

Check out our Retirees corner and join the Local 2107 Retired Members Club!

Exclusive offer for CWA
The Union for the Information Age
AFL-CIO CLC
Communications Workers of America

Cingular Super Plans	Included anytime minutes	Nights & Weekends minutes	Additional per min. charge
\$16.99	50 peak	0	.49
\$25.49	300 peak	5000	.45
\$33.99	600 peak	5000	.45
\$42.49	1000 peak	5000	.39
\$59.49	1200 peak	5000	.39
\$84.49	1700 peak	5000	.39
\$127.49	2500 peak	5000	.35

*Above rates include a 15% discount for all CWA members

Rollover minutes on plans \$33.99 and above!
Family Talk - add a line for \$9.99 per line per month on plans \$33.99 and above and share the included minutes.

All calling plans include: Caller ID, Call Forwarding, 3-Way Calling, Call Waiting, VoiceMail, Detailed Billing, Interactive Messaging /iM per message

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The Numbers Game

The numbers for the PEP, TBA and Evaluations should be out in National Operations by now so ask your supervisor. Also FYI no one received a TBA payout for 2003.

short-fall in the States budget, possibly by allowing "Slots" will be a lively debate in Annapolis. These are just a few of the legislative issues.

A Busy Political Year

By Al Schuitema

From now until November we will be seeing Primaries, Convention, and campaign ads for the fall elections. The Presidential election will be the most visual of the contests but we must remember that there are also many seats in the House and Senate that will also have a major impact on policies and laws for years to come. This also bodes true for the women

Retirees Corner

The Retiree Club Christmas Luncheon was held at Pirates Cove in Galesville on December 3. This year there were 20 in attendance. New officers for 2004 were sworn in; President-Sonny Tucker, VP-Patty Bowers, and Treasurer-Marie Carey. Secretary-Marty Gulley will be sworn in at the February meeting.

At the January meeting it was decided the Club would meet monthly except for June, July and August. It will still be the second Monday of the month at 10AM at the local office. The next meeting is February 9. Please put it on your calendar now so that you can attend.

The new officers have met and put together an active agenda. The first challenge is to get more retirees to attend the meetings. We are asking that you contact one retired member and bring that person to the meeting. Retirees need to have a say. Medicare, health benefits, pensions, prescriptions, and many more issues that affect us need our attention. Also, 2004 is a critical election year.

Dues for 2004 are being collected. If you would rather mail your dues in, please send them to CWA Local 2107, 2441 Holly Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21401-3116.

For Christmas the RMC donated \$125 worth of items to the Iraq 3ACR Unit #91483. Sergeant 38CR Timothy Farrington. sent a thank you letter detailing the excitement and appreciation the soldiers had for the gifts.

Eye on Legislation

Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) joined workers, union and civil rights leaders on Capitol Hill, Nov. 13, to announce the Employee Free Choice Act, an historic new bill to strengthen workers' rights in America.

The proposed legislation, sponsored by Kennedy and Miller, would ensure that when a majority of employees in a workplace decide to form a union, they can do so without the debilitating obstacles employers now use to block workers' free choice.

What's the Local Doing for Us Lately?

A termination in Annapolis was reversed.
A suspension was reduced from three days to one.
An EA bypassed for a lateral was moved to Hunt Valley.
A member's sales record will no longer be posted.
Attend a Local meeting to find out more.